

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 099297 TOSEC 110052

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: LETTER TO THE SECRETARY FROM BRAZILIAN FOREIGN
MINISTER SILVEIRA

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER TO THE SECRETARY FROM
BRAZILIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA WHICH WAS DELIVERED TO
DEPARTMENT LATE AFTERNOON APRIL 23.
2. BEGIN TEXT: MY DEAR HENRY, I READ WITH INTEREST THE
PAPER ON SOUTHERN AFRICA WHICH YOU HAD JOHN CRIMMINS
DELIVER TO ME. IN IT, I SAW A CONFIRMATION OF MY
OPINION THAT WHILE THE PROBLEMS OF ANGOLA ARE SERIOUS AND A
SOURCE OF CONCERN, THE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT PERPLEXITIES
OF THE PROBLEM OF SOUTHERN AFRICA CANNOT BE REDUCED SIMPLY
TO THE ANGOLAN DIMENSION WITHOUT THE LOSS OF A GREAT DEAL
OF ITS TONALITIES AND EVEN OF ITS ESSENTIAL FACTORS.
3. I AM THINKING IN THE FIRST PLACE, NATURALLY OF THE
QUESTION OF THE PERSISTENCE OF DISCRIMINATORY AND WHITE
MINORITY REGIMES IN RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA, BUT I HAVE
IN MIND ALSO OTHER QUESTIONS WHICH APPEAR TO ME TO BE
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IMPORTANT, SUCH AS THE METHODOLOGY TO BE EMPLOYED BY THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, AND MORE PARTICULARLY SO BY THE
WEST, TO ACCELERATE THE PROCESS OF INDEPENDENCE OF NAMIBIA

AND THE NEED THAT WE HAVE OF OPENING NEW OPTIONS FOR MOZAMBIQUE, THAT WILL PERMIT THEM TO ESCAPE FROM THEIR CURRENT IDEOLOGICAL DILEMMA.

4. AT ANY RATE, I SHOULD LIKE TO TRANSMIT TO YOU, BY WAY OF A FIRST COMMENT, MY CONVICTION THAT IN DEALING WITH THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, WE SHOULD HOLD TO AN OVERALL PERSPECTIVE, IT NOT BEING VERY USEFUL TO BREAK THEM DOWN INTO SIMPLER QUESTIONS AND CONCEPTS EASIER TO MANAGE BUT WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO PARTIAL AND CONSEQUENTLY MISLEADING CONCLUSIONS.

5. THE MOVEMENT OF RESISTANCE TO PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM IN ANGOLA HAS ALWAYS BEEN SUBJECT TO INTENSE FACTIONAL STRIFE. THROUGHOUT THE LONG PROCESS OF COLONIAL LIBERATION, ALL THREE MOVEMENTS RECEIVED OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE AND THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN SOME INTERFERENCE BY THE GREAT POWERS IN THE REGION. IT HAS EVEN BEEN SAID BY SOME THAT ONE OF THEM RENDERED AID TO THE THREE MOVEMENTS. IT WAS ALSO A FREQUENT PRACTICE TO RECEIVE ASSISTANCE FROM MORE THAN ONE POWER. MONDLANE IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE MADE USE OF IT IN MOZAMBIQUE. ROBERTO OF FNLA WAS COMMONLY IDENTIFIED AS A RECIPIENT OF AID BOTH FROM THE UNITED STATES AND FROM PEKING.

6. I BELIEVE THAT ONE OF THE IRONIES OF THE FINAL PHASE OF ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE WAS THE IDENTIFICATION, BY THE PRESS, OF FNLA AND UNITA AS PRO-WESTERN MOVEMENTS. THE REALITY WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE COMPLEX. IT IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION THAT BOTH HAVE A TRIBAL AND NOT A NATIONAL BASE, BUT THAT THEY BOTH ALWAYS MAINTAINED CONNECTIONS WITH THE LEFT. ROBERTO, AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS POLITICAL LIFE, FAVORED THE CREATION OF THE "CONGO KINGDOM", NOT OF AN INDEPENDENT ANGOLA. LATER, WHEN CERTAIN AFRICAN COUNTRIES PRESSURED HIM TOWARDS PROMOTING THE FUSION OF HIS MOVEMENT WITH THE MPLA, ROBERTO OBTAINED FOR HIS REFUSAL THE SUPPORT OF THE IDEOLOGIST FRANZ FANON, THEN AMBASSADOR OF

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ALGERIA (GPRA) IN ACCRA. SAVIMBI, ON HIS PART, BESIDES AFFECTING A "GUEVARIST" POSE, CULTIVATED THE SUPPORT BY CHINA. HE WENT SO FAR AS TO SEND GREETINGS TO THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM (PRG-SV) AND TO THE NEW CONGRESS OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY, IN ADDITION TO CONDEMNING "THE CONTINUANCE OF AMERICAN AGGRESSION AGAINST THE HEROIC PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIETNAM" AND "THE AGGRESSION AGAINST THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN REPUBLIC, FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER AGGRESSION BY THE SOVIET UNION AGAINST THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC". NOR CAN IT BE SAID THAT THE FNLA AND THE UNITA WERE ORGANIZED POLITICALLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH WESTERN STANDARDS. THEIR MODELS ARE THE TRADITIONAL TRIBAL ORGANIZATION OR, AT BEST, THE "DEMO-

CRATIC CENTRALISM" OF LENINIST TYPE.

7. MY INFORMATION HAD ALWAYS BEEN THAT THE MPLA, OF ALL THE MOVEMENTS, WAS BEST SUITED FOR IMPLANTATION. IT WAS THE MOST URBANIZED ONE, POSSESSING THE BEST MEMBERSHIP, GREATER PENETRATION INTO THE MIDDLE CLASS AND SPEAKING A MORE MODERN LANGUAGE. ITS CONNECTIONS WITH MOSCOW WERE KNOWN BUT DID NOT APPEAR TO RELEGATE IT TO THE CONDITION OF A SIMPLE FACADE ORGANIZATION.

8. I BELIEVE THAT IT SHOULD NOT AND CANNOT BE IGNORED THAT THE MPLA IS A COALITION OF DIVERGENT GROUPS AND INTERESTS, AND THAT ITS OWN EXPERIENCE IS ONE OF FACTIONALISM AND DIVISION.

9. AT THE PRESENT MOMENT, I CONSIDER THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE MPLA IN ANGOLA AS A REALITY, WHICH COULD BE ALTERED ONLY AT A HIGH COST TO THE WEST. BEARING IN VIEW THE ALTERNATIVES TO THE MPLA, WHICH I HAVE TRIED TO SUGGEST ARE LIMITED, BOTH FROM THE SOCIO-POLITICAL VIEWPOINT AS WELL AS THAT OF ITS URBAN AND NATIONAL PENETRATION, I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN, EVEN IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO DO SO, TO HOSTILE ACTION, WHETHER OPEN OR VEILED, AGAINST THE MPLA. BRAZIL'S INTEREST IS, IN THE FIRST PLACE, THAT ANGOLA MAINTAIN ITS NATIONAL INTEGRITY, AND THAT, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC, IT BECOMES A VALID INTERLOCUTOR TO KEEP UP A DIALOGUE WITH US.

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10. THE LUANDA GOVERNMENT IS NOT REFUSING TO MAINTAIN THIS DIALOGUE, EITHER WITH BRAZIL OR WITH THE WEST. ITS ATTITUDE IN RELATION TO WESTERN ECONOMIC INTERESTS HAS BEEN A REASONABLY MATURE AND ACCEPTABLE ONE, INCLUDING WITH REFERENCE TO THE CABINDA PETROLEUM EXPLORATION. CERTAIN WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, ON THEIR PART, ARE ALREADY SEEKING ACTIVELY TO GIVE A POSITIVE RESPONSE TO THE APPROACHES WHICH ANGOLA HAS BEEN MAKING TOWARDS THE WEST. THE BRAZILIAN TRADE MISSION WHICH VISITED ANGOLA RECENTLY RETURNED WITH A GOOD IMPRESSION OF THE WELCOME WHICH IT RECEIVED AND OF THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEANINGFUL BILATERAL INTERCHANGE.

11. THERE REMAINS, HOWEVER, THE SENSITIVE QUESTION OF THE PERMANENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA. I DO NOT HAVE AS YET SURE ELEMENTS TO EVALUATE WHETHER THE CUBAN INVOLVEMENT RESULTED FROM SOVIET PRESSURE ON FIDEL CASTRO, OR IF THE LATTER ACTED ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE. I DO KNOW THAT WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE CUBAN INTERVENTION WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE, AND I CONSEQUENTLY FEEL THAT WHATEVER THE TRUE HYPOTHESIS MAY BE, SUCH INVOLVEMENT BECAME POSSIBLE ONLY UNDER THE

PRESENT CONDITIONS OF RELAXATION OF EAST-WEST TENSION. WITHIN A MORE TENSE ATMOSPHERE, THE LONG LINE OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN CUBA AND ANGOLA AND THE RELATIVE MILITARY FRAGILITY OF THE FORMER WOULD RENDER THE OPERATION IMPOSSIBLE. THE DETENTE, I NEED NOT ADD, IS NOT THE WORK OF CUBA, ANGOLA, OR OF ANY OTHER SMALL POWER, BUT IS TIED BASICALLY TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION. WHAT REMAINS AMBIGUOUS, DESPITE ALL, IS THE DEGREE OF INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES FOR ANGOLA, AS SUCH, AND THE POSSIBLE IMPACT THAT THE ANGOLAN QUESTION MIGHT HAVE ON THE BASIC STRATEGIC EQUATION; QUESTIONS WHICH ONLY THE UNITED STATES CAN DEFINE. UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, THE BEST WAY FOR US TO AVOID ANGOLA BECOMING A STRATEGIC PROBLEM IS TO ABSTAIN FROM MEASURES THAT WOULD ALIENATE IT OR THROW IT INTO THE ARMS OF THE SOVIET UNION OR CUBA.

12. A SECOND ORDER OF CONSIDERATIONS IS THAT WE ARE NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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CONFRONTED BY AN ADVENTURE OF GUEVARIST TYPE. IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF A SMALL GROUP OF GUERRILLAS OPERATING IN AN OUT-OF-THE WAY PLACE, BUT RATHER THE PRESENCE OF A CUBAN REGULAR ARMY AT THE INVITATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF LUANDA. IF, ON ONE SIDE THIS CIRCUMSTANCE AGGRAVATES THE PROBLEM, IT MAY PERHAPS, ON THE OTHER, - ALTHOUGH THIS MAY SEEM PARADOXAL - FACILITATE ITS TREATMENT THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. A MORE OPEN AND BALANCED RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WEST AND ANGOLA WOULD INCREASE THE LATTER'S SENSITIVITY TO A CERTAIN INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE TOWARDS ELIMINATING THE ANNOYING CUBAN PRESENCE. DESPITE THIS, IT IS NECESSARY TO KEEP VERY MUCH IN MIND A CIRCUMSTANCE WHICH IMPOSES CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN THE ORIENTATION OF THE SITUATION TOWARDS A CERTAIN "NORMALIZATION" OBTAINED THROUGH CUBAN WITHDRAWAL: THE INSTABILITY OF ANGOLA AND OF SOUTHERN AFRICA AS A WHOLE.

13. PERSONALLY, I DO NOT BELIEVE IN THE GUERRILLA WARFARE OF THE FNLA AND THE UNITA AGAINST THE LUANDA GOVERNMENT. THE VERY RECOGNITION OF LUANDA BY ZAIRE AND BY ZAMBIA WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE PROBABILITY OF SUCCESS OF SUCH GUERRILLAS WOULD BE REMOTE. I THINK THAT THE QUESTION OF THE STABILITY ITSELF WITHIN THE MPLA IS MUCH MORE RELEVANT AT THE MOMENT. AGOSTINHO NETO IS BEING COMPELLED TO DO A BALANCING ACT BETWEEN THE MORE MODERATE FACTION OF "ACTIVE REVOLT" AND THE "POPULAR POWER" GROUP. UNDER PRESSURE FROM RIGHT AND LEFT, AND FURTHER CONCERNED OVER EXTREME LEFTIST GROUPS ACTING ON THE MUSSEQUES OF LUANDA, AGOSTINHO NETO - WHO, AS LEADER OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE MPLA, OCCUPIES A CENTER PLACE IN THIS SPECTRUM - WOULD NOT BE EXTREMELY PREOCCUPIED OVER ALIENATING THE CUBAN HELP, WHOSE OPERATION-

AL VALUE HE ALREADY KNOWS, UNLESS HE CAN COUNT ON OTHER
OPTIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

14. BUT, TO THE ANGOLAN INSTABILITY THERE IS ADDED THE
CLIMATE OF INSTABILITY THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE REGION.
(BY THE WAY, I AM SENDING YOU A SPECIFIC PAPER ON THE
SITUATIONS IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA, WHICH OWING TO ITS
LENGTHY NATURE, I AM FORWARDING THROUGH THE POUCH OF THE
EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON). THE POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL OF THE
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CUBAN TROOPS WOULD HELP BUT WOULD NOT RESOLVE ENTIRELY
THE REMAINING PROBLEMS OF THE REGION, WHICH, FOR OTHER
REASONS, CAN STILL REMAIN DISTURBED. I AM TROUBLED,
PARTICULARLY, OVER THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM AS A NEW SOURCE
OF TENSIONS, WHICH MIGHT SERVE AMONG OTHER THINGS AS A
PRETEXT FOR THE PERMANENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS.

15. WHILE, WITHIN PRESENT LIMITS, SUCH PRESENCE AND THAT
OF SOVIET ADVISERS DO NOT CREATE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS OF A
STRATEGIC NATURE FOR BRAZIL, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THEY
STIMULATE THE TENDENCY TOWARDS THE "SOVIETIZATION" OF
ANGOLA - SOMETHING WHICH WE CERTAINLY TRY TO DISCOURAGE -
AND LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN FOR THEIR FUTURE INCREASE, WHICH
WOULD BRING DISQUIETING CONSEQUENCES.

16. FURTHERMORE, ON THE DIPLOMATIC LEVEL, THE MILITARY
ENGAGEMENT WON A CERTAIN PRESTIGE FOR CUBA, WHICH NOW
SEEKS TO MAXIMIZE THE SERVICES PURPORTEDLY RENDERED TO
THE CAUSE OF LIBERATION OF PEOPLES. IT IS REGRETTABLE
THAT THE INTERVENTION OF ZAIRE AND STILL MORE SO THAT OF
SOUTH AFRICA MAY HAVE SERVED ADMIRABLY TO COVER THE
CUBAN ADVENTURE WITH A MANTLE OF RESPECTABILITY. ON OUR
PART, WE NEVER UNDERESTIMATED THE NEFARIOUS EFFECTS
WHICH THE SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION WOULD HAVE OVER ALL
OF AFRICA. NOT ONLY THE FNLA AND THE UNITA WERE
DEMORALIZED BY THEIR TACIT ALLIANCE, AT LEAST, WITH
RACIST TROOPS, BUT ALSO THE MODERATE AFRICAN COUNTRIES
AND THE WESTERN COUNTRIES BECAME PARALYZED IN RELATION
TO THE OVERALL ANGOLAN PROBLEM. THE CONSEQUENT IDENTI-
FICATION OF WESTERN INTERESTS WITH PRETORIA AND SALIS-
BURY IS ANOTHER ASPECT OF THE QUESTION WHICH TROUBLES ME.

17. MY INTENTION, AT THIS MOMENT, IS TO CONTINUE TO
WORK REALISTICALLY TOWARDS LIMITING THE DIPLOMATIC
DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE CUBAN INTERFERENCE. THE DIALOGUE
WHICH WE ESTABLISHED WITH LUANDA WILL CONTRIBUTE, AT A
LATER DATE, TO POSSIBLY MORE INTENSIVE AND MUTUALLY
BENEFICIAL RELATIONS, IF A MINIMUM OF INTERNATIONAL
CONDITIONS BECOME AVAILABLE TO PERMIT IT. IN INTER-

NATIONAL FORUMS, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO DEMONSTRATE OUR

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REPUDIATION FOR THE DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES OF SOUTH AFRICA, AND TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SOLUTIONS, AS PACIFIC AS POSSIBLE, IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA. LAST BUT NOT LEAST, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO SEEK MEANS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR MOZAMBIQUE TO COME OUT OF THE DIPLOMATIC LIMBO IN WHICH IT FINDS ITSELF.

18. THIS WOULD BE OUR POSITION, WITHIN THE LIMITATIONS WHICH I HAVE POINTED OUT TO YOU. MORE IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, THAN TO SHOW WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, WOULD BE, I THINK, TO ANALYZE WHY THINGS ARE OCCURRING IN A CERTAIN WAY IN THAT REGION OF SUCH GREAT IMPORTANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT, AND INDEED, OF THE WORLD.

19. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR THE EUROPEAN WEST REALLY TO FREE ITSELF FROM ITS COLONIAL BAD HABITS? WHAT DIVISION, ASYMMETRIES AND PERPLEXITIES MUST WE FACE IF NONE BUT A NEGATIVE RESPONSE BE GIVEN TO THIS QUESTION? WARMEST REGARDS, ANTONIO (A.F. AZEREDO DA SILVEIRA). END
TEXT. SISCO

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